

Fifth edition



**WMTR**

*Waste Management Technologies in Regions*

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## Dear Readers,

The Waste Management Technologies in Regions (WMTR) program is pleased to share our Fifth Newsletter, which describes the work we have accomplished during the period of July - September 2015. This newsletter will allow us to support interactive communication with colleagues and participants in the development of solid waste management sectors. Your comments and suggestions are highly appreciated; please contact us at the following address/email:

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Sincerely, WMTR Program

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## About the Program

Waste Management Technologies in Regions (WMTR) is a 4-year program that was launched on March 18, 2014. The initiative is funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and implemented by the International City/County Management Association (ICMA), together with CENN<sup>1</sup> – a local partner and a sub-recipient.

WMTR is assisting the Government of Georgia in designing an adequate waste management system in the regions of Adjara and Kakheti. The program objective is to support a cleaner and healthier environment, minimize adverse impacts from waste on human health and natural resources, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions from landfills.

## Activity Highlights

### *Third Stakeholder Consultative Group meeting*

The third meeting of the Stakeholder Consultative Group (SCG) was organized in Betsy's Hotel on September 29, 2015. Various players in the waste management sector attended the meeting, including representatives of the National Solid Waste Management Company of Georgia (NSWMC), the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources Protection (MoENRP), the Environmental Protection Division of Adjara, Batumi and Telavi City Halls, and Telavi Municipality, as well as representatives of international organizations and NGOs.

<sup>1</sup> Caucasus Environmental NGO Network





The WMTR team made a presentation on the implemented activities and documents developed during January – September 2015, including the Municipal Waste Management Plan Development Guidelines created in cooperation with the MoENRP, Gurjaani Solid Household Waste Landfill Closure Plan, maps and a web portal inventorying illegal dumpsites and waste collection service coverage areas.



During the meeting, WMTR technical experts provided the participants with detailed information on the Technical Regulation on Construction, Operation, Closure and Aftercare of Landfills and the Closure Plan of Gurjaani Solid Household Waste Landfill. Additionally, the program team presented WMTR activity plans for the next fiscal year and outlined a coordination strategy with other programs. The meeting was interactive in nature, and the attendees actively participated in the discussion and Q&A sessions.

#### ***Training on the development of business plans for self-government representatives***

On July 27 - 28, WMTR held training for local government representatives at the CENN Bulachauri Green Center to build their capacity in business planning. Twenty representatives from the Kakheti and Adjara municipalities attended the event.

The training session emphasized the importance of having well-developed business plans to ensure smooth operations for companies working in the waste collection sector. As a result of the training, the participants developed five draft business plans.

#### ***Second visit of Catawba delegation to Telavi***

In August 2015, Tom Lundy, Catawba County Manager, and Barry Edwards, Catawba County Director of Utilities and Engineering, traveled to Telavi City for a second time, as a follow-up to the Action Plan developed during the July 2015 visit to Catawba County, North Carolina, by the Telavi officials. The August trip primarily focused on analyzing Telavi waste collection routing, waste bin placement, manpower utilization, collection methods, tariff calculation and enforcement, and the existing vehicle fleet and conditions. A potential donation of a garbage truck to Telavi City by Catawba County and citizen engagement strategies were also discussed.

Telavi City Hall received concrete recommendations from the international colleagues on how to improve their tendering process. Additionally, the Catawba delegation provided Telavi officials with a waste fee calculator tool that enables its users to track annual expenses and examine potential revenues over a fifteen year period.



The Catawba delegation also visited the Telavi municipal garage facility and followed three different garbage collection routes to observe a waste collection process. Two vehicles turned out to be small and outdated and were operated by a driver and two workers who picked up garbage from residents. The US delegation suggested having the trucks stop at only two or three points along the street instead of in front of every dwelling, to help residents get used to the idea of carrying their garbage to the bins, which is the ultimate goal.





The third vehicle was an automated rear loader operated by a driver and two employees. The bins are emptied twice a day, seven days a week. Catawba representatives noted it was necessary for the city to start monitoring how full bins are at the collection times to determine whether there was a need to continue trash collection twice a day every day and whether some bins could be relocated to be utilized more effectively. They also made a suggestion to use the bins for outreach purposes by placing signage on them that reads: "Do your part in making Telavi the cleanest city in Georgia - make sure your trash is in the bin."

Catawba officials also reviewed a map provided by Telavi showing routes and bin locations. Since the map did not provide accurate information about the placement of bins, it was agreed that the WMTR project will support Telavi by developing GIS maps with accurate bin locations. New maps will be used to optimize the waste collection routes and manpower utilization.

### ***Development of a closure plan for the illegal dumpsite in Beshumi, Khulo Municipality***

In September 2015 the WMTR team has started working on a closure plan for the illegal dumpsite in Beshumi, Khulo Municipality. The dumpsite covers 780 m<sup>2</sup> of land and has been operating since 2002. The dump territory is not fenced off and is surrounded by woods. According to the information provided by the local government, the total amount of waste at the dumpsite equals 6,000 m<sup>3</sup>.

After the preparation of a closure plan, the municipality will start implementing its closure, which is expected to be finalized in the next fiscal year. The preliminary evaluation of the site showed that the cost of closure of the dumpsite will amount to approximately 140,000 GEL.

### ***Sviana recreational zone***

Sviana recreational zone is located in the Stori River Valley located in Telavi Municipality. The only paved road leading to a historical geographic area and protected areas of Tusheti lies along this valley. The valley has a significant recreational function as it is often visited by both local residents and tourists. Around 5,000 people pass the valley during summer months in order to get to the Tusheti protected areas.

Unfortunately, no waste collection has been organized in this area; thus, the WMTR program installed four dustbins. At the same time, appropriate infrastructure including tables, benches and campfire pits were also installed in the recreational zone by the CENN/ADA forestry project.

Installation of dustbins in Sviana is a pilot project aimed at promoting waste collection in the recreational zone and significantly improving the sanitary condition of the area. It must be noted that the visitors coming back from Tusheti use the dustbins too, contributing to the cleanliness of the area which improves conditions for tourism. Waste collection from the newly installed bins has already been coordinated with the municipality.

### ***Workshop with the members of the Waste Management Association to finalize an action plan and a strategy for the Association***

The Waste Management Association members held a workshop to develop an action plan and a strategy for the Association on July 1 - 2. Seven people attended the workshop where drafts of the strategy and the action plan were developed. In addition, the association members defined strategic issues and developed a detailed action plan including the resources required and assigning responsible persons for the listed tasks.

### ***Tariff and cost recovery assessments in Adjara and Kakheti***

The WMTR team conducted tariff and cost recovery assessments in Kakheti and Adjara by interviewing primary stakeholders, including local government representatives, private sector players, and residents from selected villages of Kakheti and Adjara municipalities. In addition to the interviews, the team conducted focus groups in the villages. The villages were selected using the following criteria: population size, one small and one large village, and the distance from the municipal center, totaling 32 villages in Kakheti and 20 villages in Adjara. The team also reviewed existing laws and regulations, contractual agreements between the municipalities and waste service providers, tendering documentation and other reports and then developed the Tariff and Cost Recovery Assessment Report draft.

The report provides a comprehensive assessment of the current situation regarding waste tariffs and cost recovery in both regions of Georgia and focuses mainly on municipal waste. According to the report, despite the fact that the waste management fee is typically set for residential, institutional and business waste generators, it is not paid or enforced for residential generators in most municipalities. Fees are paid by institutional and business waste generators, but they are significantly less than the actual cost of the service provided. Many villages are not currently served by municipal waste collection systems, and due to socio-economic situations some residents have difficulty paying even if the services are provided. In addition, almost none of the villages have a fee recovery system.

Based on these key findings and conclusions, the report has provided basic recommendations for the most efficient ways to plan and implement an effective cost recovery system in both regions that complies with the "Polluter Pays" principle of the Waste Management Code. The recommendations recognize that a national waste management strategy and action plan will be developed by the end of 2015 and municipalities must develop comprehensive municipal waste management plans in the upcoming years in order to define the manner in which they will meet the requirements of the Waste Management Code. The recommendations also recognize that a variety of economic instruments (including a reformed tariff framework) will be necessary in order to implement and sustain all of the waste management improvements that have been envisioned in the Waste Management Code.



## **Eco-camps for school children**

WMTR organized three ten-day eco-camps for 71 school students from Adjara and Kakheti regions, who were the winners of the Waste-to-Craft competition. The competition involved students from grades 8-11 who were asked to create crafts by repurposing household waste. The goal of the eco-camps was to increase awareness about environmental issues, in particular sustainable waste management topics among younger generations. The hope is that increased awareness will support behavioral changes in the eco-camp participants, and through them, the message will reach a broader audience - their friends, relatives, and other community representatives.



During the eco-camps, students received information on the importance of waste management in general, a specific situation in Georgia and their home regions/cities/villages, potential solutions, and their roles in this process. Students also received diverse information on waste management, integrated waste management, EU approaches to waste management, waste management in Georgia, operation of landfills and composting. Moreover, the students participated in team building exercises to help them deepen their sense of engagement as citizens, especially in regard to environmental protection. The agenda of the eco-camps also included hiking trips.

While on these trips, the students collected litter and wrote stories imagining how the litter got into the wild. Five best



stories selected by the joint vote of students and camp organizers were written into plays by one group of students. Another group of students designed puppets while the third group staged the play itself.

Students unanimously stated that team building exercises were an interesting and life-changing experience, and that they will share the information they learned about environmental issues during the eco-camp with their peers.



## **WMTR and G4G joint offsite media tour for journalists of printed media, television and radio channels on waste management issues**

On September 19 WMTR, in collaboration with the US-AID-funded Governance for Growth (G4G) Program, organized an offsite media tour for 11 representatives of print media, television, and radio. The purpose of the tour was to bring media focus to waste management issues in Georgia. The tour centered on the challenges faced by small recycling businesses. The offsite media tour included visits to Neoprint, a paper recycling factory, which produces cardboard boxes from recycled paper, and J.S.C. Mina, the only producer of glass containers in Georgia and one of the largest producers in the Caucasus, which also uses recycled glass in their operations.



The media tour ended at the Bulachauri Green Center with facilitated discussions about the importance of recycling, the Waste Management Code, and EU approaches to waste management. The Association Agreement between Georgia and EU requires that Georgia move toward EU standards in various sectors, including waste management.

## **Plastic bottles separation campaign at Beach Rugby Festival**

WMTR collected almost 2,000 plastic bottles during a two-day Beach Rugby Festival organized by the Beach Rugby Federation on July 25-26.

Four garbage bins were placed within the area of the stadium and at the entrance in order to make them more accessible to the public. Before the matches, the





event organizers announced the campaign and the students from Adjara public schools involved in the project addressed the audience asking them to place plastic bottles into the orange bins.



The students also held a small trivia competition on waste management and gave away WMTR-branded T-shirts with a recycling sign and a slogan “It is easy! Take care of the Environment” as the prizes.

The bottles collected during the festival were donated to the company Sever for recycling purposes.

**Clean-up campaign in 5 target villages of the pilot project in Telavi Municipality**

On September 18 WMTR, together with Telavi Municipality Government, joined the Clean-up Georgia cam-



campaign and five villages of Telavi Municipality – Tsinandali, Vanta, Akura, Kvemo Khodasheni and Busheti - served as a starting point for a pilot awareness-raising campaign.

Teachers and students of public schools from these villages cleaned up their school grounds as well as the nearby areas. WMTR provided gloves and garbage bags as well as T-shirts for the event participants. Almost 200 students and teachers participated in the campaign and cleaned six areas in total.

WMTR is launching a pilot project on waste separation in the same villages in the near future, thus the clean-up campaign served as an extremely important public awareness and outreach tool.

**Training on Project Cycle Management for Kakheti and Adjara teachers**

On July 21 – 23, WMTR organized a three-day Project Cycle Management training for the teachers from public schools in Adjara and Kakheti at the Bulachauri Green Center. Over the course of the training, the teachers learned about the components of a project, writing principles and budget management through various exercises.



During the practice exercises, the teachers identified existing problems at their schools and came up with potential solutions. They mentioned the lack of basic infrastructure and issues with utilities (electricity and heating) and listed nonfunctional buildings around the schools coming up with ideas on how to repurpose them. For instance, they suggested using a swimming pool as a greenhouse. Teachers also noted a high level of littering in the villages and stated that despite the positive impact of the eco-club cleaning campaigns, village residents still littered, and the related municipal services did not operate properly.

During the discussions, most teachers expressed that the training will certainly assist them in the development of various environmental projects with their students, help prioritize problems and come up with solutions.





### **Youth Summit – Students for Clean Environment**

Twenty-five students from five regions of Georgia – Adjara, Kakheti, Imereti, Samegrelo, and Samtskhe-Javakheti – gathered for a two-day Youth Summit at the Holiday Inn, Tbilisi, in order to share their views and experiences on waste management problems in their home regions and future development possibilities in Georgia.

The event was an excellent opportunity for young and motivated students to develop action plans aimed at solving some of the waste management issues in their communities. The event also served as the platform to engage governmental and non-governmental institutions and to foster a dialogue among stakeholders. The representatives from the MoENRP, the SWMCG, USAID/Caucasus Acting Mission Director Thomas Morris, and the NGO sector attended the event.

At the event, the students presented their work in four subject areas: waste problems on a global scale and in Georgia, potential solutions, their role in improvement of solid waste management, and the role of local government and other stakeholders.

Participants also shared their ideas for specific measures to reduce waste such as charging a nominal fee for plastic bags and developing closer cooperation between the governments and schools in general. The presentations were followed by a discussion of waste management related topics of interest among students, representatives of the government agencies, and non-governmental organizations.







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